

**Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council Meeting  
Northern Michigan University, Marquette  
Saturday, May 3, 2008**

**Small Group Discussion**

**Group 1**

1. **To establish good communication, what factors are most important?**
  - Honesty (both directions)  
Consistency of application and development of policies across the state and divisions
  - Timeliness of development and application of policies
  - Knowledge of subject matter (use of good science)
  - Establishment of CLEAR goals and objectives
  - Increased communication with the right people (decision makers and those knowledgeable within the DNR and stakeholder groups)
  - Increased civility in communication on both sides (spoken and unspoken)
  - More meetings like this
  - Improved utilization of web sites for communication
2. **What elements are necessary to create a citizen's advisory council that meets the need of all parties involved?**
  - Broad and balanced representation of stakeholder groups
  - The NRC and legislative participation in citizen council and communication process
  - Continuing the process initiated today
  - Clear knowledge/understanding and proper science of issue(s) being discussed by Department and stakeholder groups
  - Requires:
    1. Open-mindedness
    2. No hidden agendas
    3. Process knowledge gained and follows through with ACTION
    4. Information gained in process needs to make it to upper management and decision makers
  - Mutual trust required across stakeholder groups and between them and the Department
3. **What challenges need to be overcome?**
  - Bureaucracy within the Department
  - Ensure group is not too large to make decisions (this group perhaps too large)
  - Ensure those involved have interest and are not apathetic
  - Ensure meetings are held in the central WUP location or rotate venues
  - If recommendations group puts forward are not adopted, provide clear explanation as to why in a timely manner. (requires good feedback loop)
  - Proper science and accurate information required to make good decisions
  - Process needs to be followed through

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**Group 2**

- 1. To establish good communication, what factors are most important?**
  - Ability to share information; for example, web site, listserv, phone, mail
  - Ability to provide feedback
  - An open mind
  - Ability for various groups to collaborate and communicate issues, needs, etc.
  - Keeping records
  
- 2. What elements are necessary to create a citizen's advisory council that meets the need of all parties involved?**
  - Stakeholder representation
  - Equal representation of groups
  - Adequate notice and advertising of meetings and opportunity for participation
  - Open meetings
  - Ability to submit input even if unable to attend
  - Coordinator for meetings (funding?) DNR rep. at each meeting
  - Commitment from all stakeholders and the DNR
  - Flow of information – "NO DEAD ENDS"
  - Action and strength of groups to facilitate change
  - DNR involvement with groups
  
- 3. What challenges need to be overcome?**
  - Funding to implement recommendations
  - Expectations and understanding
  - Unity of group vs. territorial interests
  - Trust
  - Distance/geography
  - Consistent communication
  - Overcoming "I" positions to look at overall needs and goals
  - Youth involvement
  - Frequency of meetings
  - DNR feedback sufficient to community needs
  - Equal representation with rest of the state
  - Open mind
  - Listened to/voice heard in Lansing

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**Group 3**

- 1. To establish good communication, what factors are most important?**
  - Media coverage
  - Honesty
  - Forum to comment; for example, a blog
  - DNR rep on-site; for example, fishing derby
  - Scientific research
  - Informative/educate
  - User group advisory panels
  - Understand chain of command – “who’s gonna hear us”
  - Understand the politics
  - Is it an illusion of inclusion
  - Ongoing feedback
  - That our recommendations are heard
  
- 2. What elements are necessary to create a citizen’s advisory council that meets the need of all parties involved?**
  - Representation from all stakeholders (not only user groups)
  - A chance to speak and educate each other
  - Respect for all opinions
  - Local DNR involvement and influence at state level
  - Pro-active in decisions
  - Long term and short term goals/agenda
  - Prioritize the issues and address singly
  
- 3. What challenges need to be overcome?**
  - Trust in the DNR
  - Parochialism – silos
  - Ability to compromise
  - Availability of resources
  - Attendance/convenience
  - Public complacency
  - Lack of accomplishment of a goal
  - Accountability for results

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**Group 4**

- 1. To establish good communication, what factors are most important?**
  - Groups all over to deal with local issues then gather in larger groups to meet and vote on issues
  - Allow local DNR officials to have time to meet with specific user groups within each region
  - Want to hear decisions from the DNR within reasonable time. Okay to be told no or yes as long as a decision is made
  - The DNR be consistent among own agency and message to public
  - Regional (local) DNR needs to communicate hearing and deciding on local issues
  - Greater regional empowerment – somehow downstate politics don't make UP decisions
  
- 2. What elements are necessary to create a citizen's advisory council that meets the need of all parties involved?**
  - What is the role of the NRC in communication
  - Make the NRC more effective
  - Advisory committee has to be effective not just a meeting
  - Recognize different issues in different regions - different decisions may be needed in each region
  - Need coordination but still each region may need a different decision
  - Not working to have policies move from Lansing outwards - do it in reverse
  
- 3. What challenges need to be overcome?**
  - Meeting time - frequency
  - Regional then larger area and then state
  - Are they listening and responding to what is requested
  - The DNR to work for the public
  - Spread meetings throughout the whole state
  - Have more time to present issues
  - The DNR needs to communicate whether they agree or disagree with the masses
  - Money oriented decisions - the DNR ignores non-fee based sports
  - Obtain money in a way that supports all and all contribute to use the resources including silent sports, such as a conservation license
  - Meetings in the UP and more time to present issues such as a monthly breakfast meeting
  - Keep adjacent property owners in mind when making decisions.

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**Small Group Discussion**

**Group 5**

1. **To establish good communication, what factors are most important?**
  - Open transparency
  - Financial
  - Management direction
  - Local vs. Lansing
  - Communication via newsletter and/or internet
  
2. **What elements are necessary to create a citizen advisory's council that meets the need of all parties involved?**
  - Good cross representation of the UP communities and interest groups
  - Representation from each and all interest groups
  - Each group picks its own representative
  - Central location – where driving time is 1 ½ - 2 hours
  
3. **What challenges need to be overcome?**
  - Travel time
  - Overcoming personal/group agendas for the greater good
  - Trust
  - Misinformation/lack of
  - Geographic challenges
  - Tying together local – regional - state issues
  - Who and how it will be chaired and structured

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**Group 6**

- 1. To establish good communication, what factors are most important?**
  - More time per subject
  - Mode – online - surveys/mailings
  - Location
  - Response/feedback
  
- 2. What elements are necessary to create a citizen advisory's council that meets the need of all parties involved?**
  - Executive Committee; sub-committee; focus groups
  - Open forum
  - DNR feedback
  - Diversity
  
- 3. What challenges need to be overcome?**
  - Feedback/response
  - Establish mediator
  - Issues special to the UP
  - Transparency - website development
  - Location/timing of meetings
  - Include specialist input/expert help as needed

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**Group 7**

- 1. To establish good communication, what factors are most important?**
  - Listening on all sides - including the DNR
  - Openness – transparency - more details
  - Integrity in communication – both sides – interest groups can't be playing games
  - Know how input is being used
  - Show respect
  
- 2. What elements are necessary to create a citizen's advisory council that meets the need of all parties involved?**
  - Process
  - Broad representation
  - Dynamic process
  - Feed back loop
  - Positive reinforcement
  - Timeliness
  
- 3. What challenges need to be overcome?**
  - Develop trust across borders
  - Global thinking vs. cultural differences
  - Understanding different viewpoints
  - Operational challenges
  - How to keep politics out
  - Who defines the topics

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**Group 8**

1. **To establish good communication, what factors are most important?**
  - Listen better
  - Need a response
  - Someone taking notes
  - Acknowledge public opinion
  - Open minds
  - Early communication
  - Being involved in generating ideas, not just react
  - Help with understanding websites
  - More time to speak
  - Advanced notice of future agendas
  - Response of any kind
  - Understand why not in agreement
  - How and why of management
  - Make it simple
  - Public responsibility to get involved
  
2. **What elements are necessary to create a citizen's advisory council that meets the need of all parties involved?**
  - Broader representation beyond traditional groups
  - General public owns the resources
  - Post public notices well in advance
  - Council work in local units vs. regional
  - Some level of authority in decision making
  - Network between county level groups
  - Enough time to work on projects with public input
  - Awareness of information system
  - Advisory councils should not have authority, but serve in an advisory capacity (input and discussion)
  - Adequate representation of interests
  
3. **What challenges need to be overcome?**
  - Change in thinking
  - Reverse decision making from top down to bottom up
  - Listen to the consumer
  - Politics
  - Wide representation
  - Having the Department listen and respond (be open)